

Fall 2011

healthy horizons

a publication of the
Greater Hazleton Health Alliance



Features:

Let HHWC Help with Your Travel Plans
Rebecca's Desire to be Healthy
Care with Compassion
Ensuring the Future of Healthcare in Our
Community

2
6
10
12



Also In This Issue:

Hazleton General Improves Main Entrance	3	Alliance Wellness Trail	13
Message from the President/CEO	3	Aquatic Therapy Helps Local Man	14
Ensuring Patient Safety	4	The New Hazleton Health & Wellness Center Website	15
Befriend Your Neighborhood Pharmacist	5	Take Care of Your Body & It'll Take Care of You	16
Don't Flush!	5	Living with COPD	17
Learn About Weight Management at HHWC	7	Laboratory Increases Patient Safety & Productivity	18
Healthy Eating on a Student Budget	7	with New Technology	
Dealing with the Bath Salts Craze	8	The Greater Hazleton Health Alliance Welcomes	19
Suffering from Sinusitis?	9	Healthcare Providers	

Let Hazleton Health & Wellness Center Help with Your Travel Plans

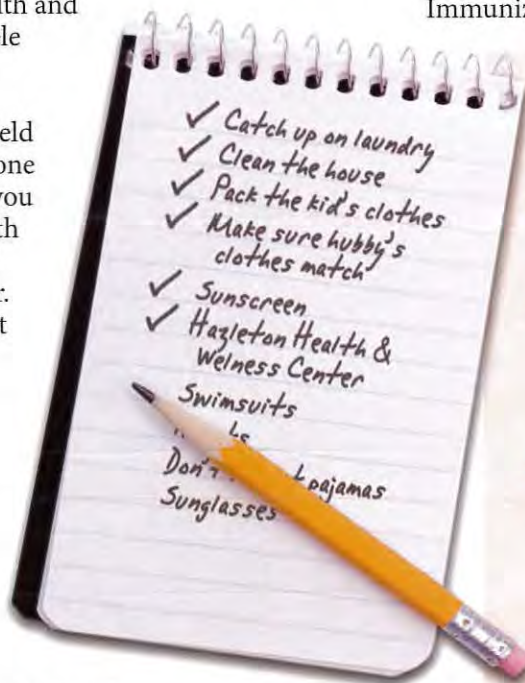
An endless list of must-do responsibilities can be a stressful way to begin your vacation.

Add the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center to your checklist to ease some of your travel anxiety... right next to "Remember sunscreen" and "Pack the swimsuits."

The Hazleton Health & Wellness Center offers this area's only travel health and immunization clinic. Dr. Michele Kowalski-McGraw is a board certified physician in Family Practice, an area leader in the field of occupational medicine, and one of the friendly faces providing you with comprehensive travel health services at the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center. Recently, Dr. Michele was the proud recipient of the International Society of Travel Medicine's (ISTM) Certificate of Knowledge.

"This certificate is something for people to look for when choosing a travel health medical provider. I wanted to provide the highest standard of care for my patients and sought the help of the International Society of Travel Medicine in order to do so. This organization provides a means to keep current with new developments along with new treatments and challenges. The certificate in travel health recognizes completion of training in the field and passing the Certificate of Knowledge exam, followed by continuing medical education," said Dr. Michele.

Dr. Michele and her team provide specific, up-to-date information about travel risks. "The travel and immunization clinic provides area residents and business travelers the convenience of a one-stop service close to home," said Laura Jones, RN, Nurse Manager, Occupational Health Services and Travel Immunization Clinic.



The clinic provides a variety of services and vaccines for all international travel needs:

- A consultation specific to the traveler's health, destination, itinerary, and medical/travel history
- Comprehensive and current health information about health and safety risks for specific travel destinations from authoritative sources such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- A physical exam and all travel and routine vaccinations including Yellow Fever, Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio, Rabies, and Tuberculosis TB skin test (tuberculin PPD)
- Malaria chemoprophylaxis, if necessary
- Prescriptions for specific travel risks

For more information, call the Travel Immunization Clinic at 570-501-6805 at least one month before your departure date. ■

Hazleton General Improves Main Entrance

Hazleton General Hospital is not only providing the Greater Hazleton community with high-quality care, but also improving access to that care as well.

In recent months, PennDOT and Hazleton General Hospital's Plant Operations team have worked side-by-side to improve access to the hospital from Broad Street and encourage better, safer traffic flow throughout the campus.

With the Hazleton General Hospital project now complete, visitors can enjoy new directional signage to help guide vehicles to various areas of the hospital campus more easily. Beautiful landscaping was added to the entrance area to complement the enhanced directional signage. In addition, the Plant Operations team widened the existing hospital roadway to accommodate the higher traffic volumes that will be entering and exiting the hospital property at various times throughout the day. In coming months, PennDOT will install a traffic light at the entrance to regulate traffic flow and ensure safety.



(left) Diagram of
Broad Street Entrance



(below) View of Entrance
from the Hospital

Message from the President/CEO



Welcome to the fall issue of *Healthy Horizons*, a publication of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance. Plenty of interesting health articles are included: nutritional topics, sinusitis, and even the bath salts craze.

In addition, be sure to read the special tribute to the nursing staff at Hazleton General Hospital at the centerfold. Learn about all they do to ensure patient safety and satisfaction.

We are especially proud to introduce the Alliance Medical Group, formerly Hazleton Professional Services, and the role this multi-specialty group plays in our community's health.

I thank you for supporting your local community hospital, and we look forward to serving any of your future healthcare needs. Enjoy the fall!

Jim Edwards
Jim Edwards,
President/CEO

Ensuring Patient Safety



Since October of 2010, a team of nursing, pharmacy, and information systems staff has worked diligently to develop the **Bedside Medication Verification (BMV)** system, which is being implemented floor by floor to ensure a very smooth transition.

This innovative system uses barcode scanning technology to confirm patient identity and medication information and then compares it against existing data available in the electronic medication administration record (eMAR). This technology acts as a safeguard by providing efficient, quality care to patients and significantly reducing the chance of error in the administration of medication.

For example, when a patient is admitted to the hospital, he/she is provided with a barcode bracelet for identification purposes. Before medication is administered, a nurse scans the bracelet to view the data. If the software detects an error, an incorrect medication, incompatibility, or even an allergy, then the nurse is alerted. "What BMV brings to care providers is the knowledge that they are providing the safest, most competent care possible to our patients," said Herb Schrepfer of Information Systems at Hazleton General Hospital. BMV will improve the medication administration process by checking for the five rights of administration on each patient:

1. **Right patient**
2. **Right medication**
3. **Right dose**
4. **Right route**
5. **Right time**

Karen Marsiglio, RN, and Marguerite Petsuck, RN, underwent extensive training and are two key players in the development of BMV. Petsuck, who has worked at Hazleton General Hospital for 30 years, says it will bring about many positive changes at the hospital in the name of patient safety. "The BMV process has been challenging but rewarding. The staff has been very receptive to this new system," said Petsuck.

The pharmacy team is very involved with patient care at Hazleton General Hospital and, like the nursing staff and information systems, has played an important role in the implementation process including barcoding each medication and conducting trials of the BMV system. "BMV is an important patient safety initiative. Every medication is barcoded, so we are absolutely sure the right medication is going to the right patient at the right time," said Dave Pogar, Pharm.D., a pharmacist at Hazleton General Hospital.

Janet Panek-Harding, Director of Pharmacy, says that patient education throughout the BMV process is integral in delivering excellent patient care. "Initially, it's going to take a little longer to administer medication since everything needs to be scanned. We keep patients informed throughout the entire process."

In addition to ensuring patient safety during medication administration, BMV also creates an integrated medical record for patients. "Since BMV is done in the patient rooms, there is more interaction that allows for patient education/questions to be answered right then and there. There is no running to a paper chart to find answers to medication questions. It's all in the system. We can educate patients about their medications, their dosage, and when it's time for their next medication," said Paula Madura, an LPN at Hazleton General Hospital.

Your healthcare team at Hazleton General Hospital is leading the way to guarantee excellence in patient safety!

"This is going to bring the focus back to the patient by enabling nurses to spend more time at the bedside."

- Karen Marsiglio, RN

Your friendly neighborhood pharmacist makes sure you have the correct medication at the prescribed dosage in a timely manner to guarantee excellent customer satisfaction, but their knowledge far exceeds filling medical prescriptions. Pharmacists are a valuable health resource for all members of the community. They provide their customers with helpful information in a comfortable environment during convenient hours. This makes it easier for customers to establish a long lasting, professional relationship with their pharmacy of choice.

Befriend Your Neighborhood Pharmacist

Danielle Venturi, R.Ph., is a pharmacist at Hazleton General Hospital with more than 20 years of experience. She believes it's important for people to tap into the knowledge of their neighborhood pharmacist.

“Pharmacists are very accessible to the community and love to be of help to their customers. It’s a big responsibility being a pharmacist, and it’s very rewarding when people feel comfortable enough to ask us questions about medications, diseases, and prevention.”

- Danielle Venturi, R.Ph.

Although hospital pharmacists aren't as visibly a part of patient care in the way physicians, nurses, and other caregivers are, they are just as important throughout a patient's hospital stay. “[At Hazleton General Hospital] pharmacists can help physicians with medication dosage, as well as checking blood levels and kidney function, and much more,” said Dave Pogar, Pharm.D., a pharmacist at Hazleton General Hospital for more than 17 years. Hospital pharmacists may have less face-to-face interaction with patients as opposed to community pharmacists, but they're just as knowledgeable, resourceful, and integral to the patient care process.

Venturi and Pogar agree that regardless of where you fill your prescriptions, it's very important to stick with one pharmacy. “People have a tendency to use a few different pharmacies,” said Venturi. One pharmacy isn't privy to another pharmacy's information. “Patients could receive duplication of therapies or have drug interactions,” said Venturi. ■

Don't Flush!



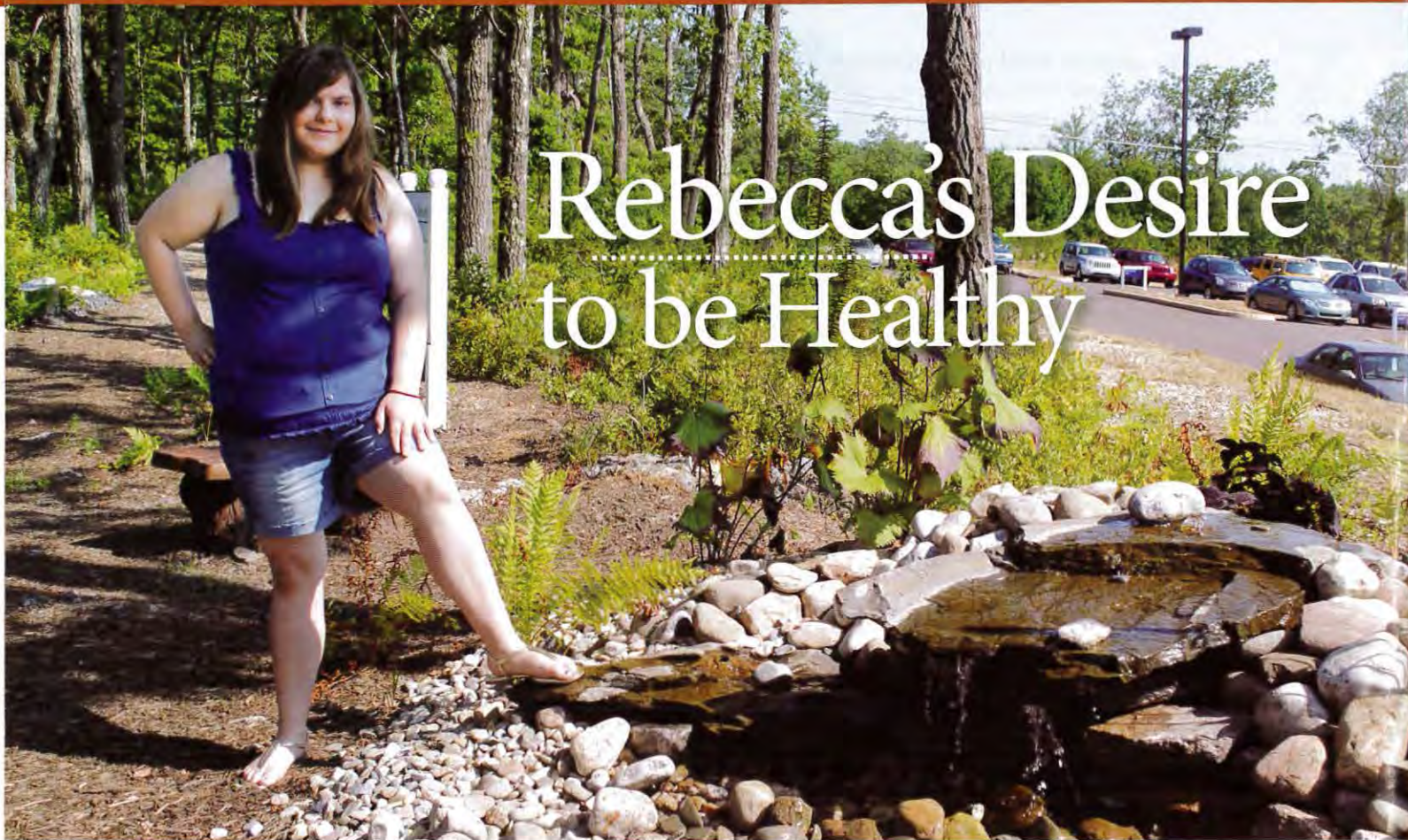
Your medication that is.

According to federal guidelines, you shouldn't flush prescription drugs down the toilet or drain unless the label accompanying the patient information specifically instructs you to do so.

Community programs are available to assist with the proper disposal of prescription drugs. You can call your city or county's household trash and recycling services to inquire about local drug take-back programs.

Don't get flustered if your community doesn't have a program. Follow these instructions to properly dispose of your medication:

- » Take your prescription drugs out of the original containers.
- » Mix the drugs with an undesirable substance, such as cat litter or used coffee grounds.
- » Put this mixture into a disposable container with a lid, such as an empty margarine tub or a sealable plastic bag.
- » Conceal or remove any personal information (Rx number).
- » Place the sealed container with the mixture and the empty drug containers in the trash. ■



Rebecca's Desire to be Healthy

Met Rebecca Martine, a 16-year-old student at Hazleton Area High School. For years, Rebecca struggled to keep her weight under control.

“A lot of it was because of poor eating habits and not enough exercise.”

- Rebecca Martine

But all that has changed. For the past 17 months, Rebecca has participated in the Weight Management Program for Kids at the Hazleton Health & Wellness Fitness Center where she works with exercise physiologists Jerrod Ferrence and Jenni Hinderer.

The fitness team developed a fitness and nutritional program that was customized to Rebecca's needs. Her program primarily consists of strength training, cardio, and portion-controlled meals.

Rebecca has lost 55.7 pounds, an amazing accomplishment that showcases her commitment. “Rebecca works very hard at every personal training session and carries that dedication home with her when managing her eating habits. She is a role model for other adolescents battling a weight problem. She shows that if you continually work hard and stay dedicated, progress will be seen,” said Hinderer.

She is 66.4 pounds away from her goal. The fitness team believes that with her steady weight loss progress, she can achieve her optimum weight in another 8-10 months. “We are extremely proud of Rebecca. When she came here, she was very shy. Rebecca's overall confidence has changed. She has improved her posture, body composition, flexibility, muscular strength, and endurance. She will benefit in all aspects of her life from her success in our program,” said Ferrence.

Rebecca says the most rewarding part of the program is the boost in her confidence and the shopping sprees. Her mom, Janet, is happy to treat her daughter to new clothes. “We're so proud of Rebecca. She's made a commitment to herself and the program to live a healthier life,” said Janet.

Anyone can join a weight management program, learn about healthy eating, and lose some weight. Many people can be successful, but it takes someone with true heart and dedication to actually live the program and maintain those successful results long term. Rebecca has learned so much more than physical fitness throughout the course of this program. She's been able to tap into the mental and emotional strength required to make healthy living a lifetime choice. ■

Learn About Weight Management at HHWC

You can experience Rebecca's results too! The Hazleton Health & Wellness Fitness Center offers a customized Weight Management Program for adults and kids, both of which incorporate various fitness and nutritional elements to help participants achieve their optimum weight loss goal.

This comprehensive program was developed in a way that makes fitness techniques fun and interactive. It combines good nutrition with personalized training and education. Also, the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center is the only fitness center in the area that utilizes the benefits of

the Bodybugg system for adults—an Internet-based program that uses an armband device to track calories burned versus calories consumed.

The Weight Management Program includes an initial evaluation by a fitness specialist, development of an individualized fitness and nutritional program, access to state-of-the-art exercise equipment, personalized training sessions, and two re-assessments to review personal progress. While kids are educated about and learn to use the fitness equipment, the exercise physiologists also encourage fun activities to keep participants motivated.

For more information about the Weight Management Program, call 570-501-6750. ■



Healthy Eating : on a Student Budget



College students are very familiar with the juggling act of attending class, completing homework, and maintaining a job. Eating healthy, well-balanced meals is a commitment that tends to fall by the wayside. What college students have the time and money to incorporate healthy meals into their everyday lifestyle? Students can enjoy healthy meals with some simple planning and savvy spending tips.



Make a Grocery List: Making a grocery list is a great way to stay within a budget. If you add just the items you need and check them off as you go through the aisles, then you'll be less likely to fill the cart with junk food. Not to mention, making a grocery list in the days prior to shopping gives you the opportunity to gather coupons. Be sure to get a super saver card from the local grocery store in your college town.



Easy Meals: Focus on making easy meals, i.e., eggs (omelets), salads, and canned tuna. Oatmeal is a fantastic way to start your day. It's loaded with fiber and nutrients, which will keep you full and discourage you from picking on unhealthy options in-between meals.



Pack a Snack: One of the biggest mistakes college students make is to leave the dorm or apartment without a healthy snack, tempting them to make poor decisions in times of hunger during or in-between classes. Always keep a healthy snack in your backpack, purse, or car (*a low-calorie granola bar, a serving size of nuts, whole wheat crackers, dry cereal that is low sugar and high fiber, a low fat cheese stick, or a piece of fruit*).



Make a Little Extra: Get yourself in the habit of eating leftovers—not day-old pizza and leftover wings. Whole wheat/whole grain pasta is a healthy and affordable option for those on a tight budget. Think outside the box. Rather than tomato sauce, microwave a bag of steamed veggies. Toss them in with the pasta and add a tablespoon of olive oil, Olivo, salt, and pepper and you have a healthy, affordable meal in less than 15 minutes. Leftovers will make a great next-day lunch. ■



Dealing with the Bath Salts Craze

Bath salts—it's become a common household name this past year and not for the right reasons. Nationally syndicated news media report that bath salts are equivalent to the worst characteristics of LSD, PCP, ecstasy, cocaine, and methamphetamine combined.

This synthetic drug is an amphetamine that acts as a central nervous system stimulant, causing a rise in blood pressure and an increase in heart rate. Users smoke, snort, inject, or even eat it in hopes of achieving increased alertness and energy, but the reality is much scarier. They can experience anything from chest pain and discomfort to heart attack and stroke. Not to mention that harmful, long term health concerns are still unknown since bath salts are relatively new to the market.

Users have exhibited signs of violent behavior, high anxiety, hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, psychosis, hypertension, insomnia, nausea, headaches, dizziness, ringing in the ears, and agitation. Unfortunately, the multitude of negative side effects is not deterring users.

"The product that's being sold as bath salts contains methylenedioxypyrovalerone (MDPV). In 2010, this drug was sold as a legal drug alternative—a drug that has never been approved for use by the FDA. It has four times the potency of drugs used to treat Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), like Ritalin and Adderall," said Dr. Eugene Gorski, a family practitioner with Alliance Medical Group—an affiliate of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance.

Since then, more than half of the states in America have made it illegal to possess bath salts. In June 2011, Governor Tom Corbett signed legislation making it illegal to deliver or possess bath salts in Pennsylvania.

The problem is that high doses of this drug will lead to prolonged panic attacks that can last for days, which then requires medical treatment. "There's no treatment available to reverse these effects, so what's happening is these individuals are ending up in emergency rooms across the nation. They're being admitted and supported with oxygen, breathing treatments, and tranquilizers until the drug is metabolized out of the system," said Dr. Gorski.



“On average, we see 2-5 cases per week. We haven’t seen a decrease since it’s been outlawed in our state. Patients comment that it’s still cheaper than any other drug on the market.”

- Kim Colvell,
Director of Emergency &
Critical Care Services

The name bath salts is what the public is most familiar with, but the drug goes by many different names on the streets including but not limited to Cloud 9, Ivory Wave, Ocean, Charge Plus, White Lightning, White Girl, Scarface, Hurricane Charlie, Vanilla Sky, Bonsai Grow,

Blue Silk, Serenity Now, Lovey Dovey, Euphoria, Aura, Red Dove, and White Dove.

“These chemicals cause very vivid hallucinations and delusions. Some patients are docile and others can be downright violent. Sometimes the violence is directly related to the hallucination and the patient’s belief that the hallucination will cause them harm. Once we’re able to sedate the patients, then they’re generally more comfortable and able to be treated more easily,” said Colvell.

“Overall, these patients are very difficult to treat initially, and we have to be concerned for the patient’s safety, as well as the staff and other patients in the emergency department. Once we have ruled out all other medical issues, then the patients typically start counseling and are placed in an appropriate facility for long term treatment.”

Remember, it is best to stay away from anyone you believe to be high on bath salts or any illegal drug; uncontrollable, erratic behavior can turn violent at any time. If a situation becomes concerning, you are encouraged to call 9-1-1 for assistance. ■

Suffering from Sinusitis?

Most people are familiar with the classic symptoms—nasal congestion, discharge, headaches, postnasal drip, sore throat, fatigue, and even a fever. Sinus infections are infamous for causing mental cloudiness, making it difficult for sufferers to focus, read, and even rest.

While many have experienced unfortunate run-ins with sinus infections from time to time, others battle them regularly. Sinusitis is a term used to describe the inflammation (swelling) of the sinuses. This occurs from a viral, bacterial, or fungal infection. The condition can be acute (symptoms last up to four weeks), sub-acute (symptoms last 4-12 weeks), or chronic (symptoms last three months or longer).

Sinusitis can develop from small hairs (cilia) in the sinuses that aren’t working properly. These hairs play an important role in helping to control a buildup of mucus. Colds and allergies, a deviated nasal septum, nasal bone spur, or nasal polyps that block the opening of the sinuses can all affect the

development of sinusitis. Below are some self-care treatment options to help reduce your sinus congestion.

- 1. Washcloth:** Apply a warm, moist washcloth to your face and breathe in. Repeat this several times per day to help break up your nasal congestion.
- 2. Fluids:** Drink plenty of fluids such as water and tea to thin out your nasal mucus.
- 3. Steam:** Inhale deep breaths of steam 2-4 times per day (i.e., in the shower) to help clear head and chest congestion.
- 4. Spray:** You can use nasal saline a few times per day.
- 5. Breathe:** Breathe better with the assistance of a humidifier.

Remember to be careful with over-the-counter spray nasal decongestants. Initially, they can be quite helpful in making you feel better, but your condition can actually worsen with prolonged use (3-5 days). ■





Care with Compassion

Hazleton General Hospital has been providing the Greater Hazleton area and its surrounding communities with healthcare services for more than 120 years. First serving the coal miners in the region as a small state hospital, Hazleton General Hospital has grown to become part of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance—Hazleton General Hospital, the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center, and Alliance Medical Group.

Hazleton General Hospital offers a variety of inpatient and outpatient services including but not limited to emergency and ICU care, diagnostic and therapeutic medical services, inpatient and outpatient surgical services, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, a secure family birthing center, imaging and cardiology services, endoscopy and laboratory services and home care. While high quality medical services are at the core of any healthcare system, there are other pieces to the puzzle that come together to complete the whole picture.

Barbara Batcha, RN, of Endoscopy Services and Mary Wydock, RN, of the Emergency Department are familiar with the elements of nursing that take patient care to the next level, such as good bedside manner and the anticipation of patient needs. Their nursing skills and compassion for patients have helped them make a significant impact on patient care at Hazleton General



Hospital for an impressive 66 combined years. Their extensive professional experience has enabled them to contribute to the evolution of nursing including the impact of technology in patient care and safety. Together, they have witnessed first hand the standard of care at Hazleton General Hospital soar to incredible heights, resulting in numerous regional, state, and national awards.

Wydock notes that a lot has changed during her time as a nurse. "Technology has changed. The standard of care has changed. Technical skills and what's expected of us have changed. But one factor that hasn't changed and never will is that people want your time. They want you to sit and talk to them. They want to know you care about them and their outcome." This special element of nursing and image of caring is paramount to the mission of our organization. While everything around us changes over time, including our neighbors, our leaders, and even our health, it's comforting to know that values like patience, compassion, and empathy still have such an influence in our lives.

At Hazleton General Hospital, we believe in high-quality care, the power of a smile, and the impact of kindness. Patients and their families might be in emergency situations that cause pain, confusion, and fear. Excellent medical care is integral throughout the recovery process but so is knowing your healthcare team truly cares about your well being, as well as the importance of informing family members of your status and properly anticipating your needs before you ever have to ask.

"Good nurses are able to take care of the task at hand and provide excellent patient care, but great nurses believe in going above and beyond through small acts of kindness that leave a lasting impression. Those nurses that emulate greatness are who we have the pleasure of employing here at Hazleton General Hospital," said Jim Edwards, President/CEO of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance. "They're compassionate caretakers who treat each patient as if he or she were their own family members, and we're so proud to have them as part of the healthcare team at Hazleton General Hospital—right here in your community, serving your medical needs and those of your family."

Batcha and Wydock believe in objectivity when taking care of patients. "It's the mission of every nurse to take care of a shooter in the same way you take care of the victim. It's a human being with the same basic needs as any of us," said Wydock. All patients are treated with respect, kindness, and consideration throughout their hospital stay, which serves as a reminder that we provide high-quality care despite gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. "Nurses are on the front lines of patient care and so the impression they make is a lasting one. There aren't too many fields that enable you to be a hero to someone each and every day. That's something special," said Michael Golden, Chief Nursing Officer at Hazleton General Hospital.

In addition to a non-judgmental view, Batcha believes

there's something to be said for walking a mile in a patient's shoes.

"Everyone needs to know what it's like to be a patient. A little role reversal can go a long way in attaining the right perspective, not to mention it's a humbling experience. There's more to healthcare than just the business aspect. Compassion and empathy are qualities that nurses need to have in order to properly care for patients."

- Barbara Batcha

These inherent qualities are found in all of our staff at Hazleton General Hospital. "Educators can teach you the medical skills, but they can't teach you compassion and empathy. That's not teachable, it's inbred."

For example, as Batcha and Wydock say, "A warm blanket goes a long way." Think of the warmth and comfort a blanket provides. In much the same way, the nursing staff acts as a layer of warmth and comfort to patients during difficult times. Keeping patients informed, answering questions, anticipating needs, and offering an ear to listen are some of the many acts of kindness our nurses do, not only as a part of patient satisfaction, but also because it's their personal mission as a nurse.

Batcha is pleased that our community has witnessed the success of the Alliance. "Every healthcare institution in every single community has issues to deal with, but people see the changes we've made, the awards we've received, and the quality care we're providing. Those patients who have experienced the turnaround first hand are our organization's best form of public relations," said Batcha.

One such example of great PR is Wydock herself. She experienced a heart attack and was rushed to Hazleton General Hospital as part of the MI Alert Program, an award-winning cardiac program developed in conjunction with Lehigh Valley Health Network. It enables small community hospitals like us to identify heart attack patients and transfer them to a partner hospital with the resources to provide optimal treatment in 90 minutes or less. "We've made so many strides in quality care as a Center of Excellence - Primary Stroke Center, and through our Stroke Alert and MI Alert programs to name a few. I've worked here longer than I've lived anywhere. I've been a patient here—I've been a part of a successful system. My family and friends have been patients here. I trust the physicians and caregivers with those I love," said Wydock.

It's an honor that in a small community such as ours, we have the opportunity to take care of friends and family. ■



Ensuring the Future of Healthcare

The face of healthcare is ever-changing which presents ongoing challenges not only for patients, but for health providers, like hospitals and physicians, as well. Keeping with its mission to provide compassionate, patient-centered, quality healthcare services and to the ongoing development of a healthier community, the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance continues to make strategic decisions to meet the challenges that healthcare brings to it today and into the future. One of those challenges is to recruit high quality physicians and specialists to our area to meet its ever-growing and diverse medical needs.

With that in mind, the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance is pleased to announce the formation of the Alliance Medical Group (AMG). The Alliance Medical Group is a not-for-profit medical management company under the corporate umbrella of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance responsible for recruiting and employing physicians and managing their medical practices. "Physicians are moving to hospital-owned practices for a number of reasons," said Dr. Eugene Gorski, medical director of the Alliance Medical Group and previously in private practice.

"There is uncertainty of reimbursement for the future, practices are pushed to make capital-intensive investments in information technology, and practices face even greater regulatory and reporting requirements than in the past."

According to the Medical Group Management Association, more than half (65 percent) of established physicians in the nation were placed in hospital-owned practices and almost half (49 percent) of physicians hired out of residency or fellowship were placed within hospital-owned practices. The Alliance Medical Group meets this rapidly growing need of our healthcare providers.

"It doesn't surprise me that more and more physicians, either those right out of residency or those who have been in private practice for a number of years, want to be part of an employment model," said Jim Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Hazleton Health Alliance. "They are seeking better work-life balance and less personal risk. And, frankly, physicians want to do what they do best. Take care of patients without all of the administrative responsibilities of owning a private practice."



in Our Community

Alliance Medical Group is the first healthcare provider in the Greater Hazleton area to offer a fully integrated approach to family and specialized medical and surgical care. This highly experienced network of healthcare providers is committed to providing our community with high-quality services throughout the continuum of care—from pre-birth through the golden years. The physicians and other healthcare providers, such as certified registered nurse practitioners (CRNPs) and certified physician assistants (PA-Cs), who are part of the Alliance Medical Group represent varying specialties such as family practice, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, cardiology, endocrinology, pulmonology, sleep medicine and general, orthopedic, vascular, thoracic and bariatric surgery. ■

Alliance
MEDICAL GROUP

Your Health... That's Our Specialty.

Alliance Wellness Trail



Leadership Hazleton, in conjunction with the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center, has developed an Alliance Wellness Trail on the property of the Dessen Women's and Children's Center adjacent to the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center.

The Alliance Wellness Trail is a beautiful, natural, and safe outdoor environment that promotes fitness and rehabilitation for our local community members. It includes a water feature, seating areas, 1/4-1/2 mile wellness trail, adult and pediatric occupational therapy/fitness stations, and much more.

"The trail is a prime example of cooperation working for the betterment of the Greater Hazleton area," said Joe Clark, Executive Director of Leadership Hazleton.

A dedication ceremony was held on June 29 at the location of the trail. Leadership Hazleton and Hazleton Health & Wellness Center representatives welcomed Greater Hazleton Health Alliance staff and community members as they detailed the project, introduced the project team, and concluded with a ribbon cutting.

"We look forward to seeing people use the trail and are very grateful to Leadership Hazleton for making it all happen," said Megan Scherer, Assistant Administrator at the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center. ■





Aquatic Therapy helps local man

As a former Marine, local resident Billy Swire was trained to remain focused on the task at hand, persevere in difficult situations, and maintain a sense of pride and responsibility in all that he did. Those qualities proved essential to recovery when he entered rehabilitation after a snowboarding accident left him with two pelvis fractures, three vertebrae fractures, a broken sacrum, and a dislocated left shoulder.

"I grew up skateboarding and snowboarding. Over the years, you learn how to roll out of falls. This simply means allowing your body to relax and roll with the energy of the fall to avoid injury," said Billy.

But nothing could prepare him for what would happen that day. "The jump was about 10-12 feet high with a steep lip. I hit the jump going about 25 mph. As soon as I was airborne, I knew I was in big trouble. I could not level out the tail end of my board. This caused my body position to be parallel to the ground. When I landed, I heard and felt all the bones in my lower back and hips crunch."

While the ski patrol responded quickly, the damage was done. "I was taken by ambulance to a nearby trauma center and was unable to move on my own for about a week. I never felt so much pain in my life. I was bruised from my thighs to my lower back. I just put

myself in a positive state of mind and said that I was going to get through this and be 100 percent again," said Billy.

Billy gradually regained his strength and used a walker, which was a huge step based on his injuries. Upon discharge, he required inpatient rehabilitation services that assisted him in everything from getting showered, going to and from the bathroom, getting in and out of bed, and, as Billy states, everything else we take for granted each day.

Billy noticed progress during each stage of his recovery. It was his decision to enter the aquatic therapy program at the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center that took his rehabilitation to an entirely different level of recovery.

"I chose this program because they have very professional staff and are known to have a great aquatics program," said Billy, who expresses his deepest gratitude to his aquatics instructor, Gene Myers, PTA, for helping him achieve a better quality of life.

"My aquatics experience was in a very private and relaxing environment. The water is as warm as a bath, which makes patients feel comfortable. Gene is very knowledgeable and has a physical fitness background, so he helped me start off slow and easy to see where I was at," said Billy.

Aquatic therapy is simply physical therapy in the water, so patients are able to achieve a sense of lightness and ease in the pool that cannot be achieved for all patients through land-based therapy.

"I used the underwater treadmill and also did exercises that I would not have been able to do on land. After my exercises, I used the jet to massage my sore muscles. Everyday I got out of the water and felt like I made progress. I felt a little stronger and more flexible. Over the course of approximately one month, I worked my way up from 15 reps per exercise to 45 reps with weights. I went from doing a slow walk on the treadmill to swimming about 10 minutes at a strong pace."

While Billy was given all the tools to assist in the recovery process, he believes each patient has to do their part by contributing 100 percent to their program and having a positive mindset throughout.

"Healing can be a very long road. It was a very spiritual experience for me. I learned a lot about myself, my inner strength, and the people who love me," said Billy.

Visit the new Health & Wellness Center website at www.hazletonhealthandwellness.org or call 570-501-4624 to learn more about aquatic therapy. ■

Check Out



☒ **Visually appealing**

☒ **User-friendly**

☒ **Interactive**

☒ **Informative**



www.hazletonhealthandwellness.org

THE NEW

Hazleton Health & Wellness Center Website!

Scan this QR code
with your mobile
or smartphone to
connect directly
to our website.



Area residents enjoy going to the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center because it's a premiere outpatient facility that offers state-of-the-art technology and equipment, high-quality services provided by experienced staff, and customer-friendly service from start to finish.

A new and improved website was created for the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center to reinforce the positive image of the facility already present in the community. All of the hard work that went into developing this dynamic website was done with you in mind!

What's most rewarding is the team was able to develop a website that's inclusive of all age groups. Adults can request an appointment for themselves or their family members, learn about job opportunities, hear video testimonials, and become educated about services.

Be sure to check out the new website at www.hazletonhealthandwellness.org and be sure to join us on Facebook and Twitter. ■

Take Care of Your Body & It'll Take Care of You

Athletes must take care of their bodies in much the same way mechanics maintain vehicles. Tune-ups, oil changes, and new tires all are necessary to make sure a car is working properly. Similarly, athletes must “maintain” their bodies by stretching their muscles, exercising their bodies, and eating/drinking properly before, during, and after intense physical activity. Amy Cartwright is a Registered Dietitian (RD) and a team member of the Northeast Bariatric Center at Hazleton General Hospital. Below she has provided some important nutritional information for athletes to remain healthy.

What foods should be eaten to maximize energy during intense physical activity? A simple pre-exercise snack with plenty of water should fuel the body sufficiently. The best pre-workout meal is one that works best for the individual and is not digested too rapidly. Try these ideas:

- » A banana with one tablespoon of peanut butter
- » Low-fat yogurt and a piece of fruit
- » Oatmeal made with skim milk and fruit
- » Trail mix with nuts and fruit
- » Granola with low-fat milk and fruit
- » A smoothie made with low-fat yogurt, fresh fruit, and wheat germ or flax meal

What foods should be avoided prior to an intense workout? Avoid high-fat protein sources such as fried meats, cheese, and hamburgers because they take longer to empty from the stomach and may contribute to a sluggish or nauseated feeling. Also, avoid concentrated sweets such as cakes, cookies, and donuts. These foods give a quick energy boost but then leave you feeling tired and sluggish shortly thereafter.

Are there any particular foods/drinks that should be consumed to replace important nutrients in the body after a lot of physical activity? Post-workout foods and drinks can assist recovery by diminishing fatigue, replenishing glycogen stores, and preparing for future bouts of exercise. Consume the following:

- » Water
- » Juices
- » High-water-content fruit (watermelon, grapes, melon, and oranges)
- » High-carbohydrate sports drinks

What's the importance of replenishing?

Replenishing the sodium, potassium and electrolytes your body needs (sometimes lost through sweating) is easy to do through foods. Using supplements generally is not recommended. The following are common recovery foods, which are high in essential electrolytes:

- » Potatoes
- » Yogurt
- » Orange juice
- » Bananas
- » Soup
- » Cereals
- » Cheese
- » Breads

What foods help to avoid muscle cramping?

Staying hydrated is important to avoid muscle cramping. In addition, potassium also plays an important role. Eat your bananas! ■



Living with COPD

More than 12 million Americans are diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease which is classified under two main conditions known as emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

As a progressive medical condition, symptoms tend to worsen over time. Patients experience severe breathing difficulties, fatigue, wheezing, shortness of breath, large amounts of mucus, and frequent respiratory infections. Many COPD patients smoke or used to smoke, but it also can be caused by long-term exposure to other lung irritants, such as chemical fumes/gases, air pollution, and dust.

As the fourth leading cause of death in Americans, the Hazleton Health & Wellness Center doesn't take this diagnosis lightly. A multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals has developed a pulmonary rehabilitation program to help patients care for their lungs. The program, has a team approach to clinical management and health maintenance of patients with chronic respiratory disease—COPD, severe asthma, chest wall disease, cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, interstitial lung disease, lung cancer, selected neuromuscular diseases, post-polio syndrome and perioperative conditions.

The team of healthcare professionals, including a board certified internal medicine physician, a pulmonologist, exercise physiologist, respiratory therapists, physical and occupational therapists, nurses, fitness specialists and nutritionists, provide a wide range of comprehensive services.

Patients are required to have pulmonary function testing prior to beginning the program. Following a physician referral, patients in the program undergo an assessment to determine an appropriate and individualized plan, which is based on patient goals, current fitness level, and medical complications/disabilities. In addition, patients also participate in monitored exercise, breathing classes, and educational sessions.

Upon completion of the program, many patients will have an increased functional capacity, a better understanding of pulmonary disease and medications, a decreased risk for future incidents, and a healthier pulmonary lifestyle that allows them to live life more independently.

For more information call 570-501-4624 ■

Laboratory Increases Patient Safety & Productivity with New Technology



The Laboratory Department at Hazleton General Hospital has made significant investments in laboratory upgrades to enhance patient care and safety. Hazleton General recently acquired the new **Siemens Dimension Vista® 500 Intelligent Lab System** and **StreamLAB® Automation System with SYNGO technology**. Hazleton General Hospital is one of only four hospitals in the nation and eight in the world to have this cutting-edge technology.

In addition to enhancing patient care and safety, the technology will streamline workflow in the department and accomplish better efficiency with less labor and in less time. That means better results for our patients.

Combining the Siemens Vista® technology with the StreamLAB® Automation System results in consistent, accurate, high-quality chemistry and immunochemistry testing that is faster than many systems on the market.

One test example is troponin, a cardiac test that determines if a patient experienced a heart attack. This test, which was previously completed in 25 minutes, now can be performed in approximately 10 minutes—a drastic reduction in test time. “Every minute counts in situations like these,” said Tony Rizzardi, Director of the Laboratory Department.

The StreamLAB® Automation Solutions component automates the chemistry lab, a feature

that is typically found in larger, acute care centers. Dr. Jeffrey Null, pathologist and Medical Director of the Laboratory Department at Hazleton General Hospital, says the new technology is efficient all around. “The technology archives and tracks all specimens—speeding up turn-around-time.”

For example, now a patient name can be entered into the system and the instrument will tell staff exactly where the specimen is, making it more efficient for staff to locate a specimen quickly in order to run additional tests for a physician order. It’s a big time saver when hundreds of tests are being run simultaneously, all of which contributes to increased productivity in the name of patient care and safety.

“This addition will improve patient care by producing quicker results for physicians and their patients, as well as reducing a patient’s length of stay (LOS) in the hospital.”

- Tony Rizzardi
Director of the
Laboratory Department

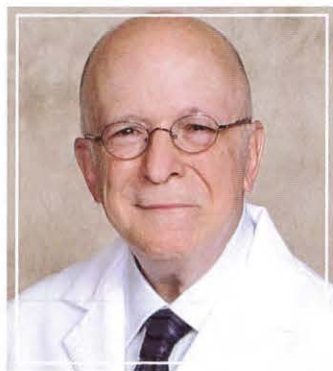
StreamLAB® Automation Solutions is one more way your community hospital is improving healthcare in the area. ■



THE GREATER HAZLETON HEALTH ALLIANCE
**Welcomes the following Healthcare
 Providers to its medical staff.**



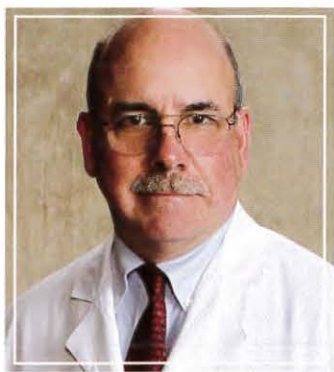
Frances A. Feudale, DO,
 Emergency Medicine, Board Certified
 Lehigh Valley Physician Group
 Emergency Department
 Hazleton General Hospital



Stephan R. Glicken, MD, FAAP
 Pediatrics, Board Certified
 Alliance Medical Group
 1000 Alliance Drive, Hazleton, PA 18202
 P: 570-501-6400 F: 570-453-2353



Jodi Washinsky Lenko, MD
 Internal Medicine, Board Certified
 1730 East Broad Street
 Hazleton, PA 18201
 P: 570-459-2226 F: 570-459-2511



Henry F. Smith, Jr., MD
 Pulmonary Disease/Sleep Medicine,
 Board Certified
 150 Mundy Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702
 P: 570-823-7009 F: 570-820-8249



JoAnn M. Panisak, PA-C
 Certified Physician Assistant
 Mountain Area Healthcare
 23 E. Broad Street, Hazleton, PA 18201
 P: 570-454-8204 F: 570-459-0099



Jenyne Podlinski, PA-C
 Certified Physician Assistant
 Lehigh Valley Physician Group
 Hazleton General Hospital
 Emergency Department



Shelley Sassaman, PA-C
 Certified Physician Assistant, Certified Diabetes Educator
 Alliance Medical Group
 231 Claremont Avenue (Route 309)
 Hometown (Tamaqua), PA 18252
 P: 570-225-7211 F: 570-225-7221



Meghan E. Tait, PA-C
 Certified Physician Assistant
 Alliance Medical Group
 19 Banks Avenue, Sugarloaf, PA 18249
 P: 570-788-5104 F: 570-788-5777

Greater Hazleton Health Alliance

Our heart is in healthcare.



700 East Broad Street, Hazleton, PA 18201
570.501.4000
www.ghha.org



50 Moisey Drive, Hazleton, PA 18202
570.501.6600
www.hazletonhealthandwellness.org



Hazleton General Hospital
700 East Broad Street, Hazleton, PA 18201
570.501.6322
www.nebariatrics.com



1701 East Broad Street, Hazleton, PA 18201
570.459.0082
Route 309, Hometown, PA 18252
570.668.3898
www.ghha.org



700 East Broad Street, Hazleton, PA 182010

Gunderson Rehabilitation Center • Hazleton General Home Care
Primary Stroke Center • Healthy Steps Joint Replacement Program

Hazleton General Hospital is a nonprofit, independently operated, voluntary regional medical center offering, in association with medical staff, a wide range of health technologies and specialty services. Earnings are devoted exclusively to the continuation and improvement of patient services and facilities, as well as educational and outreach activities. The information in this publication is not intended for the purpose of diagnosing or prescribing. If you have concerns about health issues, contact your personal physician.

Periodically, we send communications to friends and neighbors in our community that describe the healthcare services and the products we offer. If you would prefer not to receive communications like this from our organization, please call 570.501.6204.